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Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child
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18 May–5 June 2015
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the report submitted by the Lao People's Democratic Republic under article 8, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (15 pages maximum), if possible before 20 April 2015.

The Committee may take up any aspects of children's rights set out in the Optional Protocol during the dialogue with the State party.

1. In the light of the fact that there are no provisions in the Penal Law that provide for the punishment of offences involving the recruitment of children into the armed forces, as indicated in paragraph 18 of the State party's report, please clarify whether the State party has any plans to criminalize the recruitment of children.

2. Please indicate whether the State party intends to define the recruitment of children under the age of 15 as a war crime and to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

3. In the light of the information provided in paragraph 7 of the State party's report, please provide updated and detailed information on the measures taken to disseminate the provisions of the Optional Protocol, and indicate whether professional groups, children and the general public have been particularly targeted. Please also indicate whether any training on the Optional Protocol has been provided for professionals working for or with children who are likely to have been involved in armed conflict, especially for members of the armed forces, the police, immigration officials, lawyers, judges and medical and social workers.

4. With reference to paragraph 13 of the State party's report, please elaborate on the type of schools operated by the army and the police for children of enlisted personnel, and indicate what measures are taken and safeguards put in place to ensure that children in those schools do not receive any form of military training. Please also indicate whether there are any children under 18 years of age attending the Lao National Military Academy. Furthermore, please comment on reports that members of the Lao People's Army visit

secondary schools and hold one- or two-day events to introduce pupils to the activities of the armed forces and encourage them to embark on a career in the armed forces.

5. Please comment on reports that children under the age of 18 belonging to ethnic minorities have been recruited by the armed forces, and indicate what measures are being taken to put a stop to that practice.

6. In view of reports that the number of children in possession of a birth certificate is very low, please explain what safeguards are in place to prevent children from joining the army before the age of 18.

7. Given that the State party is, per capita, the most heavily bombed nation in the world and that the proportion of child casualties resulting from unexploded ordnance (UXO) accidents has increased steadily, please provide detailed information on the measures the State party is taking to clear UXO and indicate whether any further measures are currently planned. Please also indicate what support is provided to child victims of UXO accidents and their families by the Victim Assistance Unit within the National Regulatory Authority and the access child victims have to recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration services, as well as to financial support. Furthermore, please indicate the measures taken to provide all children with education on UXO risks, particularly in the most heavily contaminated provinces (Attapu, Champasak, Houaphan, Khammouan, Louangphrabang, Salavan, Savannakhet, Xekong and Xiangkhoang).